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Denton, Caroline Co. Md., 1st February, 1871. Feb. 4-11

Select Poetry.

SPRING FLOWERS.

M. R. W.

April has dallied with us too long,
Now putting us off with the robin's song,
Now out of a cloud of misty gloom,
Nodding and tossing her slender plume,
As if they were sprays of Summer-blossoms;
Anon, with the sunshine on her crown,
Shifting her cloak, all ragged and brown,
To give us glimpses of her green gown,
Lifting her veil, or glimmering through,
Just to let us see how blue, how blue
Are her eyes, the deep, enchanting hue
Which brings the liverleaf's cup with blue.

It is time for April's flowers to show,
Along the hem of her gown's soft flow.
I plucked the earliest long ago,
From a cloud-piled field of sunset-sky,
For the wild March-anemone had drifted by;
Lilac, white, and the delicate dye
Tinting the cheeks of anemone,
For the pink of the buds that drink
At a brown brook's mossy, flower-fringed brink
And rare, even those upper leaves,
That crimson tint of clear pale green,
Which only blooms in the sky, I wren.

It is time for April's flowers to show
Along the hem of her gown's soft flow.
I plucked the earliest long ago,
When the robin the wizard's song was new.
A vision of blossoms serenely blue,
Breathing shy, delicate odors forth,
Appeared and vanished, a fairy-gift,
A vision by robin conjured forth.
But it comes no more, the robin's ring,
And I wait with eyes, listening,
For the sign-like flowers, with sunny eyes
And odorous breath, no more arise.

—From *Alone for April*.

Popular Miscellany.

SOMETHING ABOUT SHAD AND THE DELAWARE FISHERIES.

All that concerns the fisheries on the Delaware is of interest to a large class of persons who live along both banks of the river, and everything written on the subject is read with avidity. The late report of Drs. Howell and Slack, Commissioners of Fisheries of the State of New Jersey, made to the Legislature of that State, contains a good deal of information on the fish and fisheries of the Delaware that is new to the general reader. They have examined the subject carefully and thoroughly, and appear to be well acquainted with it. The report commences with nothing when the migratory fishes from the sea enter the Delaware, and seek its clear, quick waters to deposit their spawn, and to nurse their young.

"This usually occurs in the Delaware river about the middle of March, though in very early seasons a few make their appearance in the upper portion of Delaware Bay during the month of February. These migratory fishes are the shad, herring, rock-fish and sturgeon; we have no certain knowledge that salmon ever frequented the waters, they are not known to have been found farther south than the Hudson. Inasmuch as the waters of the Delaware would seem to afford a suitable habitat for them, presenting the usual characteristics of salmon rivers, measures are about being taken, at the expense of the commissioners, to place in the Delaware near its headwaters one thousand young salmon, hatched by the artificial process."

In the report of the Commissioners of Fisheries of Massachusetts, for 1870, the manner in which shad and Alewives or herring spawn has been ascertained by direct observation. Of the shad it is said:

"Gathered in close schools, the males and females circle about, often with the dorsal-fins out of water, suddenly, as if by an electric shock, they make a dart and immediately clouds of spawn and milt are shot into the water. Where there is only single pair of shad they swim slowly in circles, the male keeping his head close to the pectoral-fins of the female."

The habits of herring during the process of spawning has likewise been observed with care, and a full account thereof is to be found in the Massachusetts Fisheries report for 1867. As neither shad nor herring are cannibalistic, it has not yet been determined what they live on. The stomachs of the former, caught a hundred miles up the river, have been found filled with the half digested fragments of a well-known marine-aquatic plant found along the coast; while from the stomachs of those caught below Philadelphia, has been taken a soft unknown substance. Of the rock or striped bass, which are captured in the Delaware in immense numbers, the Commissioners say of them and their spawning:

"The rock fish or striped bass are captured in the Delaware in immense numbers. At Milford, thirty-five miles above Trenton, thousands have been captured during the past season by the illegal method of brush damming the river, a flagrant violation of our river-laws which we hope will not be repeated. The fish here captured were small, few having been taken of over four pounds weight, though in the lower Delaware they attain an enormous size; one captured at Howells's a few years since having attained the enormous weight of eighty pounds. They spawn in tidal creeks near the mouth of the river during the late spring or early summer months; they have been found in the month of June distended with spawn not yet ripe. They are taken at all seasons of the year, and it is a strange and unexplained fact, that they are now (January 1) being captured on the New Jersey coast of the same size as those taken in early spring. It was formerly believed that this fish ascended our rivers for the purpose of depositing its spawn, but it is now ascertained that its object is solely to obtain food, which is afforded in

immense quantity by the young fry or the shad. A dozen rock fish were purchased in October last from the fishery at Upper Black's Eddy; of these, the stomachs of nine were found to contain young shad of from two to three and a half inches in length."

Of the runs of shad it is said: "The successive runs of shad continue from about the middle of March to the last of June or the early part of July, they having been sold during the past year in Bucks county, Pennsylvania, on July 4th. They are few in number until the middle of April, from this time to the middle of May comes what is known among fishermen as the great run, after that their number rapidly diminishes. The same phenomena are observable in the downward course of the fry to the sea. Those early spawned, few in number, are descending, while adults are still ascending the stream. Young shad two and a half inches long, were observed June 8, 1869, at Howells's Fishery by one of our commissioners."

The shad are current fish. They enter our rivers in the spring and take their departure in the fall when they are swollen by rains. They stem the current with great facility, and ascend the stream until some obstruction prevents them going up farther. There is a difference of opinion as to what becomes of them in the winter after they descend the rivers. Some believe they skirt down our Southern coast in great droves, and when winter is over they turn round and come back, leaving a squad at the mouth of each river. Others think they resort to the gulf stream where they spend the winter in the warm waters of that great current of the ocean. Of course what becomes with the shad in winter is mere supposition at best, but inasmuch as the cold take long journeys to within the Arctic circle to find spawning ground, why may not the shad journey far likewise to spend an agreeable winter.

The shad and other fish are caught by what are known as gilling or drift nets, and sweeping or shore seines. The former have been in use only since 1822-23, while the latter have been in use from the earliest settlement of the States. These shore fisheries were much more numerous than at present—there being now only about thirty from the head of the Delaware Bay to Trenton, and about eighty from the latter place to the New York State line. In ordinary seasons operations commence at these fisheries about the tenth of April, and should terminate, according to law, below Trenton Falls, June 10, and above, June 15—but unfortunately for the fish the law is not always observed. There about 700 men employed in the shore fisheries below Trenton, and in the upper Delaware the number employed is about 500. They are paid by the month, with board. The operations of the fisheries are much interrupted by storms, and below Philadelphia by vessels running aground, or anchoring or passing over the fishing grounds at the particular time when the tide suits for laying off the seines. Before the owner of a shore fishery enters upon it he is obliged, by law, to file in the Prothonotary's office a description, in writing, of his fishery, the length of seine used, &c., and to give security in \$1000 for the payment of all fines and penalties, &c. The number of shad fisheries on the Delaware from below Trenton Falls to the mouth, is thirty-two, of which ten are on the Pennsylvania shore, and the remainder in New Jersey. The aggregate number of men employed is six hundred, and the length of seine used, in fathoms almost seven thousand. Above the Falls there is a large number of small fisheries, with an average of seven hands to each, and length of seine used about fifty-five fathoms. The number of gilling seines in use between Trenton and Calumet, about 100 miles, is estimated at from 500 to 1000. When first introduced fifty years ago, their use was restricted, but of late the law is disregarded. The length of seine used in these 100 miles will reach, it is thought, 300,000 yards. It is the practice below Trenton, and where the water is deep enough above, to stretch the net across the channel, and there stake or anchor it for a considerable time, and afterward loose it and let it float. This is a very objectionable practice. The gilling seines are supposed to have driven the shad away from the Delaware, as they have fallen off in quantity very greatly since these nets were used, and to the shad fisheries catch much fewer. Down to 1820, when there were no gill nets, and which was the most productive year ever known, there was no diminution in number or size of shad; and in that year the great haul of ten thousand eight hundred shad was made at Fancy Hill. They have fallen off in size and weight. Shad of eight, nine, or ten pound were formerly quite common, the average being about seven, but few are caught that weigh six or seven pounds. This diminution is attributed to the gilling nets. Besides the great numbers caught by these nets, many are so injured that they die. The commissioners state that it is a notorious fact that the majority of the gill net proprietors fish not only on Saturday nights and Sundays, but during the entire month of June, and some even into July. On the upper Delaware, during the past few years, there has been little fishing on the Sabbath, but fishing on Saturday night is quite common, and shad are caught and sold until the first of July, a violation of the law.

As a proof of the constant and persistent decrease of the number of shad captured in the Delaware, by the shore-fisheries, we give the number caught at Howells's two fisheries, the principal ones on the Jersey shore of the river. The time is divided into three periods of five years each, the first from 1818 to 1822, being prior to the introduction of gill-nets; the second from 1845 to 1849, when the gill nets were fairly established; and the third, 1865 to 1869, after they had assumed their present proportions:

Season of 1818.....	111,402 shad.
" 1819.....	159,864 "
" 1820.....	170,559 "
" 1821.....	107,091 "
" 1822.....	107,194 "
Average.....	656,146

Season of 1845.....	131,320 per annum.
" 1846.....	65,614 "
" 1847.....	90,540 shad.
" 1848.....	125,659 "
" 1849.....	59,949 "
" 1850.....	17,304 "
" 1851.....	38,998 "
Average.....	63,450

Season of 1865.....	34,222
" 1866.....	44,925 shad.
" 1867.....	59,550 "
" 1868.....	98,000 "
" 1869.....	43,550 "
" 1870.....	38,274 "
Average.....	60,739 per annum.

Season of 1870.....	30,269
" 1871.....	52,759
Average.....	26,379

The commissioners state that of all the species of apparatus ever devised by human ingenuity for the wanton and persistent destruction of young shad, the palm must be awarded to the gill-net. This is principally found above tide water, the great spawning ground of our migratory fishes. They have wings of stone or brush, sometimes extending entirely across the river, and sometimes two abreast. It seems almost an impossibility for any of the young shad to escape uninjured. They are found along the river in immense numbers, and the number of young shad they destroy is almost beyond calculation. From one of our men, Belvidere, a cart load of young shad was taken in one day. Mr. Isaac Scarborough, of New Hope, says he has seen hundreds of dead young shad in one afternoon in the fish basket at Bulls' Island and Center Bridge. Persons watching the baskets at night are frequently obliged to clear them from the young shad, by means of scoop-shovels. A law should be passed to prohibit these baskets in the Delaware, and that law should be enforced. Between these fish baskets, and the dams erected on the Delaware by the Trenton Water Power Company, to feed the Delaware and Raritan Canal, to improve the navigation, or for manufacturing purposes, the shad will ultimately be driven from the river; and the legislatures of our two States cannot do a better work than correct these evils by a stringent law. The fishing interest is too important to allow it to be broken up. To show that these obstructions drive the shad away, we would state, that since the improvements made in the dam and race-way of the Trenton Water Power Company, at Sandbar's Falls, the catch of shad has greatly increased the past season in the upper Delaware, while no improvement is visible at the tide-water fisheries. Shad have appeared in localities far up the river, where they have not been seen for a long time before. A project is on foot to add the number of shad in the Delaware by artificial propagation, by private enterprise. The number of shad caught in the Delaware in 1870 is estimated at two and half millions, and it is thought that with a rigid enforcement of the present laws, and the passage of such as the commissioners recommend, the number, in a few years, could be increased four fold. We hope Pennsylvania will emulate the example of New Jersey, and give proper attention to the preservation and protection of the migratory fishes that frequent the Delaware.

A bill for the protection of the shad fisheries of the Delaware, drawn up by the Commissioners of Fisheries of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, passed the House of Representatives of the latter State, on the 21st instant. It is divided into four sections: Section first forbids the having in possession of shad caught in the Delaware river after June 16. Section second forbids the drawing of any seine in the Delaware river, between June 16th and August 10th. This is to give the fishes a fair opportunity to deposit their spawn. The remaining portion of the bill provides for the appointment of fish wardens, whose duty it shall be to take cognizance of all infringements of the fishing code, and bring the offenders to justice. It is the intention of the Commissioners to prepare an abstract of the fishing laws of the State and forward the same, for an application, to all interested.—*Daghestown, Pa. Democrat.*

NEURALGIA.—Sufferers from neuralgia may be pleased to learn that a medical correspondent of the *London Lancet*, writes:—"A few years ago, when in China, I ascertained that the natives when attacked with neuralgia used oil of peppermint, which they lightly applied to the seat of pain with a camel's hair pencil. Since then, in my own practice, I have frequently employed this oil as a local anesthetic, not only in neuralgia, but also in gout, with remarkably good results."

LONDON HAS 816 newspapers, of which 21 are daily; 216 are weeklies, 100 of which are issued on Saturday, and only one on Sunday. It has also 483 periodical publications, such as magazines, reviews, &c., of which 290 are religious, representing every shade of opinion. It has 50 juvenile publications, nearly all of them illustrated.

DEEP VS. SHALLOW CORN PLANTING. "We are continually being asked by inquiring minds for the best mode of planting corn, if experience is worth anything in connection with common sense in planting corn whether deep or shallow, and whether the fertilizer (if any is used) should be applied immediately in contact with the grain, or covered with earth before the grain is dropped. On this subject of corn planting, like nearly all agricultural subjects, there is doubtless a great contrariety of opinions and experiences among those recognized as good farmers. My object now is not to intrude my judgment, but to elicit the judgments of scientific and practical farmers on the subject—how should corn be planted—in deep or shallow furrows, and how covered, that the best results may be produced? Some practical farmers cling with wonderful tenacity to the notion that the corn ground should be run out in quite shallow furrows, and corn planted as near the surface as possible. I cannot divine why this practice is regarded with so much favor, unless they want the roots as near the top of the ground as may be, to be perched up when drought comes. Or it may be they imagine all the virtue of the soil, like that of some men, to be on the surface, and that the rain passing down through the earth, carry the nourishing elements upward to the surface instead of downward through the body of the soil. But whatever may be the idea of these farmers who want to keep as near to daylight as possible, like small coasters hugging the shores and never venturing far on the bosom of the ocean, I am unable on any sound reason to approve their practice. However, when one positively disapproves a course of operation, it is only fair that he should indicate a substitute. (Well, I do not claim to be much of a farmer, if I do condemn some ideas, but I am anxious to learn.)

How, then, should we plant corn? The ground being well prepared, it should be furrowed out, both ways, to four feet apart, from three and half to four feet apart, the plow being allowed to go down quite deep, say within two or three inches of the bottom of the broken ground, where the plowing has been from six to nine inches deep. Ordinarily the furrow should be run out two-thirds the depth of the plowing. Having done this, the corn must be dropped in the bottom of the furrow and covered lightly, with not more than two inches of earth on the grain; and less is better where the soil is moist and warm, for the light covering insures early coming up, and often more healthy condition in the first stage of growth. The advantages of light covering become apparent, too, when we look at the injurious consequences of deep covering, in the frequent failure of the corn to come up at all; and if it does work its way through the mass of clay and mud, and break the crust on top, which has had time to form because of the shoveling of the stalk coming through the ground, it generally leads a sickly existence for some time. The longer the corn plant is coming up, the slower the growth, and the more yellow it appears for some time. To have the plant start up quickly and grow vigorously at the beginning of the season is a great desideratum; but to have the crop appropriate to itself all the available materials in the ground, and the farmer not be guilty of the bad financial policy of allowing his money to remain in the soil in the shape of fertilizers, producing no interest, is a greater desideratum.

How then can we avail ourselves most largely of the producing elements contained in the land? By planting deep enough to afford the roots an opportunity to reach and pierce the lower or deeper portion of the soil, and that as early in the season as possible. We want to draw substance from soil to produce the biggest crop; and if we put on fertilizers we want to get them back in the crop at the earliest day, and not have them lie dormant in the ground. The manural properties in ground near the surface are generally liable to be carried down deeper into the soil by the rains, and in their descent they are taken up by the roots and made available in producing the plant; hence the roots well down draw food not only from the lower soil with which they are in contact but also from the upper portion of the soil.—*L. Sager, Cypress Point, Cumberland County, Tennessee.*

REMARKABLE EXPOSITION OF MASONIC MYSTERIES.

I flatter myself I understand something about secret societies. I've had a passion for that sort of thing ever since I was old enough to tell lies. I have scoured around pretty extensively among the different organizations. I've been at Orangemen and a Fenian, and a Good Templar, and a Counterfeiter, and also a Son of Malta. I have belonged to the Sons of Temperance, and the Odd Fellows, and the Band of Hope, and a band of robbers. I've been into everything, and I thought I knew everything almost, but I didn't. Three months ago I became infatuated with masonry, and since I joined that organization I've discovered that there are several things connected therewith that outsiders don't know just a pretty good deal about. Now, Mr. Editor, I propose making these secrets public, not out of compassion for my fellow-men, who may be tending towards Masonry, and act as a warning and so on, because I haven't got a spark of human kindness in my breast, and would rather see every mother's son put to the torture than not, but because I have a spite against the fellows who initiated me, who made the iron too hot, and the goat too frisky, and treated me with a roughness, generally, that the occasion did not warrant.

Before formulating my narrative, I will state, for the benefit of those who don't know, that Masonry is about six thousand years old. It was old when the fraternity got into trouble at the tower of Babel, and it was old when Adam first put on his apron as Grand Master of Eden Lodge. As more convincing truth of its antiquity, I would just mention that a party of miners, the other day, in one of their excavations, came upon the petrified remains of a Masonic Lodge, with the members in their places and all complete; and eminent geologists who have examined the fossils are of the opinion that these bodies have been imbedded in the rock for more than fifteen thousand years.

On the evening I was to be initiated I made my will and took a most affecting leave of my family. Thus prepared, I started for the Lodge accompanied by Brother John Smith, S. R. S. P. E. who was to "see me through." We had no difficulty getting past the first entrance; but when we knocked at the second, a flat little fellow looked out through a round hole in the door, and put this startling inquiry to Brother Smith: "Chetuxichronhighcehlorum?" to which Brother Smith replied cheerfully: "Nix-my-dolly-whack-doo." The little fellow then said: "Hoddestcomphridityum;" and my conductor giving a satisfactory answer, we were permitted to enter. Before I had time to look around me, a long-legged fellow knocked me over with a club; he then stood on my feet, and another marauder made a rush at me and brought me down again. After I had undergone exhilarating exercise for about five minutes, they stretched me out on a bench and examined my teeth, pinched my muscles, and stuck pins into me all over, and shoved cayenne pepper up my nose, and poured molasses down my throat, and pulled hairs out of my neck with red-hot tongs, and, with a view, I suppose, to make me uncomfortable and at home.

When I came to my senses I was alone in the ante-room of the lodge. It was a lively and cheerful apartment. A couple of crocodiles were amusing themselves in a corner, and a few full-grown rattlesnakes were practising the flying trapeze on a stove pipe. The furniture consisted chiefly of half a dozen mummies, the skeletons of Captain Kidd, Lucretia Borgia, Guy Fawkes, Jack the Giant Killer, Oliver Cromwell, the Wandering Jew, William the Conqueror, Christopher Columbus and Dick Turpin; a flying machine, and a remarkably healthy and well-developed wild-cat. Just then half a dozen pirates, clad in aprons and sashes, rushed into the room with a whoop. One of them, the biggest and ugliest, who appeared to be the chief, ordered the attendants, in a voice of thunder, to trot out the animal. The attendants disappeared, but immediately reappeared, leading an iron-clad goat, a regular double-decker, with sixteen horns, a pair of wings, and seven or eight tails stuck up all over him. My eyes were bandaged, and I was told to mount. I said:

"Gentlemen, if you'll excuse me, I would rather not. I'm not accustomed to going up in a balloon; and, besides, I've got an engagement down town. My wife wants to see me particularly; I'll be back in a few minutes. I rather think my house is on fire, but I'll be back in a few minutes—yes, gentlemen, in a few—"

Before I could finish my sentence, I was seized from behind and planted firmly astride the infernal goat. Somebody then said, "Let go," and away he went. I've been through a great many perilous scenes; I've taken part in an election fight; I've been down in a railway collision, and I've taken a steamboat explosion; I've fallen down three flights of stairs, and walked out of a fourth story window, but this goat excursion was a little ahead of them all. When I came to reflect on the matter in cold blood, I wonder that I ever came out alive. The furious beast kicked and screamed, and rolled over, and turned back somersaults, and front somersaults, and drove me against the ceiling and underneath the chairs, till the bandage fell from my eyes and I had to let go. The goat vanished up the chimney in a blue flame, and I found myself in the centre of the lodge-room, with about fifty Masons in aprons, and nothing else, dancing a war dance

around me. The rest of the masonry

were standing on their heads in the different corners, all but the cadaverous balancer, who seemed to be the head of the department. Soon they left off dancing, and marched round the room, chanting an inspiring dirge. I was then hoisted up in front of the Chief's desk, who thus addressed me:

"Brother Kobb, you are now one of us. You are a member of an institution that has lasted over three million years. You are impervious to mundane imbecilities. You are water proof and fire-proof, you are over proof. You can walk through the river or sit on a red-hot stove with impunity. Mortal man cannot harm you, and the devil himself must curl up his tail and walk off at your approach. Be virtuous, Mr. Kobb, and you will be happy."

I then assumed a sash and apron.

Kobb, Jr.

MODES OF SALUTATION.

The usual salutation at Cairo is, "How do you sweet?" a dry hot skin being sure indication of a destructive ephemeral fever. Greenlanders have none, and laugh at the idea of one person being superior to another. Islanders, near the Philippines, take a person's hand or foot, and rub it over their face. Laplanders apply their nose against the persons they salute very strongly. In the Straits of the Sound, they raise the left foot of the person addressed, pass it gently over the right leg, and thence to the face. The inhabitants of the Philippines bend very low, placing their hands on their cheeks, and raise one foot into the air with the knee bent. The Dutch, who are considered as great, have a morning salutation, common among all classes, "Smakelyksteen."—"May you eat a hearty dinner."—"Another is, 'Hoe want u?'—"How do you sail?" adopted, no doubt, in the early periods of the Republic, when they were all navigators and fishermen.

Some author has been observed in contrasting the haughty Spaniard with the frivolous Frenchman, that the proud steady gait and inflexible solemnity of the former were expressed in his mode of salutation, "Comie ceta?"—"How do you stand?" while the "Comment vous portez vous?"—"How do you carry yourself?" was equally expressive of the gay motion and incessant action of the latter.